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4 December 1979

FBIS COVERAGE IMPROVEMENTS

Middle East & South Asia

+ FBIS and BBC coverage of Iran was increased considerably in the past year through TDY monitoring operations in the Persian Gulf area; technical improvements in Tel Aviv and Bahrain; and staffing additions in England, Tel Aviv, and Nicosia. Tehran domestic radio is now kept on 24-hour watch. Iranian regional transmitters, and Tehran broadcasts in Arabic, Urdu, Kurdish and Azerbaijani have been added to regular coverage. A permanent monitoring installation now being established in Bahrain provides some coverage of Iranian regional radios and Tehran and Abadan television, and will improve coverage of Iranian broadcasts to neighboring Muslim countries as well as of broadcasts beamed to Iran from the Soviet Union and other countries in the area. The number of Iranian newspapers available for exploitation has been reduced, but four are covered regularly and four anti-Khomeyni organs published outside Iran are on order.

+ Poor reception at existing FBIS and BBC monitoring installations limits coverage of the Sudanese radio but FBIS has asked Cypriot Government permission to start remote monitoring in western Cyprus that will correct this.

+ Coverage of Afghan domestic and international broadcasts was improved with the start of operations in Bahrain and the addition of Persian/Dari linguists to the BBC monitoring staff. Moscow broadcasts in Dari were also placed on regular daily coverage.

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+ Radio coverage of Spain and Italy has been improved markedly through BBC's establishment of a remote antenna site at Land's End, England. Comprehensive coverage of the domestic radios of both countries is now possible. Staff was added to exploit more publications from both countries on such topics as political dynamics in southern Italy; labor unrest and nuclear developments in Italy; Basque and Catalan politics; Spanish military information; and S&T information from both Italian and Spanish sources. The number of Portuguese publications exploited has doubled in the past year.

+ Within the past year, five Turkish papers, representing Islamic, Maoist and rightwing groups, have been added to coverage.

Central America

+ Coverage of Nicaragua improved significantly with the start of a recording operation from the Embassy in Managua in September 1979. This provides previously unmonitorable radio material and current exploitation of the Nicaraguan press. Three newspapers have been added to Headquarters coverage in the past month.

+ Radio coverage of Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador, now virtually nil due to inaudibility, will be improved by a contract recording operation approved to begin in Guatemala City in January 1980. Another recording operation has been approved in principle for Tegucigalpa; approval is being sought for one in San Salvador.

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Africa

+ Establishment last April of the FBIS bureau in Abidjan, Ivory Coast, made possible comprehensive coverage of Nigerian radio. An economic weekly was added to coverage.

+ Unsuccessful in efforts to establish a monitoring installation in Lusaka and Botswana, which would have made possible coverage of Zaire radio and improved coverage of the frontline states, FBIS has turned to Swaziland as the next best monitoring site. A bureau in Mbabane would provide some coverage of Angola and enhance coverage of the other frontline states and South Africa, but would not be in a position to monitor Kinshasa radio. The Swazi Government has not yet responded to an Embassy request made in June to approve an FBIS installation in Mbabane.